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THE SHORTLIST



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THE STAT SHEET

731

Number of letters sent to Minneapolis residents warning they face a \$500 fine for renting their homes on Airbnb without a license

22,000

Number of Crystal residents who will soon have their sidewalks shoveled for them, courtesy of the city

150

Number of people who bought fake tickets to the Super Bowl, some of whom paid as much as \$5,000

\$1.8 billion

Annual amount Minnesotans pay in administrative costs for their health insurance, representing the sweet life of the middle man

"In Eveleth, it's practically the official town beer. We call it 'Schunka' (šunka), which is 'ham' in Slovenian."

Reader Glenn Bergum responds to "How humble Hamm's beer became cool," at citypages.com.

COWARDICE & THE NRA

NINETY-SEVEN PERCENT of Americans favor universal background checks. Eighty-three percent favor mandatory waiting periods on all purchases. Sixty-seven percent favor a ban on assault rifles.

But you won't see any action on gun control from the Minnesota Legislature. The Republican Party and select Democratic allies are so afraid of the NRA they're willing to blow off their constituents' wishes—and their lives.

"I'm not going to waste time on bills that are not eventually going to become a success," says Sen. Warren Limmer (R-Maple Grove), chairman of the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee, on the possibility of courage erupting this year.

POPULAR STORIES

AT CITYPAGES.COM

50 great **MITCH HEDBERG** jokes on what would've been his 50th birthday

Charges: Minneapolis man **JERRY CURRY** abused, raped daughters, fathered two children

How humble **HAMM'S BEER** became cool

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YES-MEN IN RETREAT

After Florida massacre, even Jason Lewis is afraid to celebrate guns

After yet another slaughter of children, at a Parkland, Florida school, some of America's biggest enablers of mass murder are beginning to evolve. Or at least pretend to.

President Donald Trump says he'll ban bump stocks. Florida Gov. Rick Scott, who has an A+ rating from the NRA, has proposed raising the minimum age to buy any gun. Ohio Gov. John Kasich, A-rated, spoke out against AR-15s on CNN.

And in Minnesota, the DFL's leading gubernatorial choice, Tim Walz—rated A+—is trying to distance himself from the gun lobby by reminding everybody that he's voted repeatedly for universal background checks.

Even Woodbury Congressman Jason Lewis seems to recognize that if you believe in more guns at any cost, it's a good time to lie low.

Lewis was scheduled to headline a fund-

raiser last Friday with Dr. John Lott, a faux researcher who believes that more guns make people safer, despite pretty much all evidence to the contrary.

The Scott County GOP, who organized the event, promoted it as "Celebrating the 2nd Amendment with John Lott and Rep. Jason Lewis."

Lewis is perhaps Minnesota's greatest proponent of anything-goes gun laws. Not long ago, he was boasting of a bill that would take away Minnesota's right to say who can and who can't carry a gun within the state.

But Lewis backed out of the event. His office claims the congressman never agreed to make an appearance, much less take center stage. The event was eventually renamed "Dr. John Lott, Honoring the 2nd Amendment."

According to Lewis' office, he wanted to be respectful of Parkland's victims, and disapproved of anybody "exploiting a tragedy



GLEN STUBBE, STAR TRIBUNE

for partisan gain" when the nation "should be grieving for the lost lives."

On Friday, hundreds of demonstrators held a candlelight vigil outside the Lakeville Arts Center, where the event took place. They wanted elected officials to work on ending mass shootings, rather than "celebrating the legislative spinelessness that enables them."

Yet some politicians could not be dissuaded from attending a fundraiser with a guy who once made up a fan persona to

praise his own pro-gun research. State GOP Chairwoman Jennifer Carnahan and Republican gubernatorial frontrunner Jeff Johnson, a Hennepin County commissioner, were in attendance.

Neither responded to the vigil or to DFL Chair Ken Martin's criticism: "While students mourn, march in the streets, and demand an end to gun violence, the Minnesota GOP is raising money by celebrating the legislative cowardice that perpetuates these tragedies." —SUSAN DU

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The Lunch Guy

A transgender kitchen worker calls out Minneapolis Public Schools

As a kid growing up in Oakdale, Stillwater, and then Minneapolis, Chase Hermes Bakken tried to conform to expectations. That meant being a butch lesbian. Short hair, masculine clothes.

Chase's parents—a lunch lady and a tool-and-die guy, both practicing Catholics—had grown used to this side of their child.

Then, at age 20, Chase realized he was not a butch lesbian, but a man. He decided to transition.

"My parents were supportive, but grieving me at the same time. Your parents grieve who you used to be."

The strife was worth it. Chase had struggled with chronic depression. He'd resented his female body, and felt uncomfortable in public. Even going to work at a Hollywood Video store or as a pizza delivery driver felt like a chore, a constant act of masking and pretending.

Life after transitioning was much easier. Chase passes as a man, no questions asked, which puts him in control of who he tells about being transgender. In early 2015, he took a job at Riverbend Education Center, a K-8 alternative school in near north Minneapolis. Chase planned to keep his identity a secret.

He worked as a lunchroom cook, dish- ing up food for a student body with "sig- nificant emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs," as the school's website notes. He'd wound up working the same job as his mom, and he loved it. He knew a lot of the kids weren't getting regular meals at home—not good ones anyway. His breakfasts and lunches were setting

them up for better learning.

Chase invited kids into the kitchen to help prep meals. He'd teach them how to tabulate and track inventory on a pro- duction sheet. "I thought, 'I'm going to do this for the rest of my life,'" he says.

But in the summer of 2016, Chase's secret got out. According to a subsequent complaint filed with the Minneapolis

**His boss
asked the group,
"Did you know Chase
is really a girl?"**

Department of Human Rights, at a meet- ing where he wasn't present, his boss in the district's food services department asked the group, "Did you know Chase is really a girl?" Word spread quickly.

Chase took his outing to the district's civil rights director, who told him he couldn't investigate "just because [his] feelings are hurt," according to the complaint.

With the help of his union, he asked for a meeting with his supervisor's boss, who refused to assign him to a different supervisor, and suggested that Chase try to explain his identity to his boss. He was also warned that getting the union involved would "make things worse." And so it did.

The woman who'd outed Chase started

talking down to him and yelling about mistakes, humiliating him in front of co- workers and students, according to his human rights complaint.

Chase was pitched back into a depres- sion he hadn't felt since his confused youth. He started seeing a therapist. He cried on the drive home from work. He grew distant from his wife and son. He thought about killing himself.

Last fall, he sought a new job, this time as a janitor, and was placed in a differ- ent school. It was a heartbreaking move. Outside the food department, he had "zero" bad experiences with the people at Riverbend.

One of those people fought to bring him back. Lead custodian Will Aanonson had seen Chase's commitment in the kitchen, skipping breaks to make sure the kids' food was ready. After he was outed, Chase told Aanonson he was transgender. The idea this fact might matter was lost on the burly custodian.

"I saw [Chase] cared deep down for kids in my building, and most people in the city probably don't even want to know the kids in my building exist," says Aanonson, a seven-year veteran at Riverbend.

Aanonson was able to bring Chase back as one of his janitors, where he exhibited the same work ethic he'd brought to the cafeteria. The assignment would not last. Chase was again sent to another school, a move that occurred not long after his former food services supervisor came to Riverbend and saw Chase working there, according to Aanonson.

"It wasn't just me that wanted him to



Mike Mullen

stay," Aanonson says. "Everybody in that building wanted him to stay."

Minneapolis Public Schools says it's unable to publicly address the case unless Chase signs a release. (Chase declined, fearing the district would "make things up" to hurt him.) In a statement, the dis- trict says it is "proud to welcome staff and students of all backgrounds," pointing out that its inclusion of "gender identity and sexual orientation as protected classes" goes beyond the federal standard.

That's not enough, says Chase, who now works in the district's before- and after-school program. This time, he's not waiting for gossip to get around about his being transgender.

Earlier this month, Chase testified about his experience in front of the school board, asking when the district would honor policies it already has in place.

"I came out to the whole board, to the whole district, because of the situation at hand," he says. "I'm not doing this just because I was wronged, or for myself. I'm doing this to protect our trans kids in the future." □

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Follow Mike on Twitter: @mikemullen_

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Andy is in a relationship. Make that several. Over the past three years, the 31-year-old divorced mother with a ballerina's physique, septum piercing, and "R-E-A-D M-O-R-E" inked on her knuckles has had three male partners—and subsequent heartbreaks.

She also dates a young married couple and occasionally sleeps with another married couple. Once, both married couples and Andy went camping together, children in tow.

She considers herself non-monogamous. Nationally, it's estimated that 5 percent of the population has some sort of non-monogamous structure in their relationship. MN Poly, a St. Paul-based meetup group, boasts more than 1,200 members. Non-monogamy has recently caught on in pop culture, from onscreen interpretations in *House of Cards*, *Insecure*, and *Professor Marston and the Wonder Women* to advice columnist Dan Savage's endorsement of "monogamish" relationships.

No two non-monogamous arrangements are exactly alike. People seek additional partners not just for sex but for affection, companionship, love, co-parenting, and socializing. These configurations require ongoing negotiations about appropriate partners, parameters of sex and dating, STD protection, and birth control.

Even the language non-monogamists use is carefully curated. Non-monogamy is an umbrella term; beneath it are myriad variations on the theme. Polyamory involves loving more than one person, with all the inherent emotional involvement and time investment. Sometimes polyamorous practitioners identify one partner as "primary," creating a hierarchy to prioritize their many relationships.

Non-monogamy subtypes unfold from there. Open marriage allows one or both spouses to have sex with other people, often in a friends-with-benefits-style arrangement. Cuckolding is a fetish, one in which a husband takes pleasure in his wife sleeping with other men; voyeurism is often involved. Swinging is a limited-time opportunity for couples to have sex with other people; post-coital contact is discouraged. (Among non-monogamists, there's a joke that goes: "Swingers have sex; polyamorous people have conversations.") As for polygamy? It's the black sheep of the non-monogamy family, weighted with religious, consent, and power structure issues.

That non-monogamy works for many doesn't mean it's accepted by the masses—it's the status outsiders love to hate.



PIERRE WARE

"If you don't like me because of this lifestyle, then you don't need to be in my life," says Andy.

An Open Secret

Meet the Minnesotans finding love through polyamory

— By Erica Rivera —

Abortion on your own terms.



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Controlled Chaos

If non-monogamy sounds complicated, it can be.

"It's going to be messy. You have to allow for some messiness," Andy says.

"Messy" is a recurring theme in her relationships. A survivor of childhood sexual trauma and sexual assault, Andy met her ex-husband at 18. They married two years after their son's birth—a decision Andy knew was doomed from the moment she walked down the aisle, sick to her stomach. Following a series of affairs, one of which turned violent, Andy moved out of her marital home. She immersed herself in therapy and joined a rape survivors support group, where she first saw the book *The Ethical Slut* (a.k.a. "the poly Bible"). She read it and wept at the realization that she could love more than one person at a time.

"Finding non-monogamy was like the stories I've heard of people finally realizing they're gay," she says.

All this time, she had been wrestling with the restraints of monogamy; now she saw a way to feel anything for anyone, as long as it was all out in the open.

But in practice, that level of transparency has been more elusive than she expected.

"I keep dating these people that have never really heard of, or tried, or read any poly literature," Andy laments. "I have to coach, educate, counsel, and date them."

In Andy's experience, men will often present as single when in fact they're still coupled, however tenuously. She says some men are willing to try non-monogamy for the first time but can't hack the honesty required for the arrangement to work.

While there have been several failures on the boyfriend front, Andy is happily dating a married couple, the wife a fashionable bookworm, the husband a beer enthusiast. She sees the couple weekly and speaks to them daily.

"I fall in love with them more when I see them together because I watch how much they love each other and well they run their lives together," Andy says. "They counsel me. They're the emotional, strong, foundational support in my life."

Three's Company

Karen* and Jim* are a couple who share a suburban home with Karen's bisexual partner Rob*, where all three parent four teenagers together. Karen and Jim didn't plan on having a non-monogamous marriage per se, though Karen often joked that it would be nice to have a wife around to help with the child-rearing and housework.

Fate introduced the couple to Rob, a bearded teddy bear of a man, in 2011 while working on a Theater in the Round production. When Rob and Karen first met, he was six years divorced from the mother of his children. Karen appreciated Rob's big energy and how easy it was to talk to him. Jim enjoyed his company, too; the three of them continued to work on theater productions together and became close friends. But Karen couldn't kick the feeling that Rob was someone she needed in her life; the only other person she'd ever felt that way about was Jim.

"We always had a hard time saying goodbye at the end of the day. There was always more to talk about and it felt so good just to be together, even in a platonic, professional way," Karen says of Rob.

“

IT'S GOING TO
BE MESSY. YOU
HAVE TO ALLOW
FOR SOME
MESSINESS.

"They clearly had a very close and compatible relationship," Jim recalls. "We were all aware that sometimes people would see the two of them together and think they were acting 'couplish' and there would be various degrees of intrigue or scandal."

Then tragedy struck. Rob's 40-year-old ex-wife died suddenly of a brain aneurysm, thrusting Rob into the role of full-time caregiver to grieving children. He turned to Karen for support. The two families ended up moving in together and Karen came clean about her feelings for Rob. Three and a half years later, Karen maintains romantic relationships with both men.

"It's not a fear of commitment. It's commitment, plus one," she says. "Jim and I spent 20 years together monogamously and this is not a plug to fill a problem. This is something that the parts are greater than the whole and it would be sad to not take advantage of this opportunity for everybody's life to be fuller, richer, better."

Sex is a part of, but not the epicenter, of their arrangement. "It's not as racy a story as all that. It's about driving kids to practice or who's going to be home any given night of the week," Karen says. "We don't have specific designated anything. It's catch-as-catch-can, but we try to make sure that there's a balance and that nobody's getting nothing."

*Names have been changed to keep identities private from employers and, in some cases, family members.

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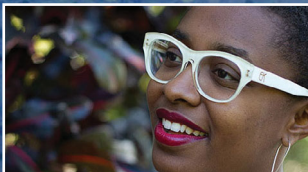
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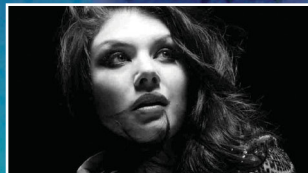
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JOSÉ JAMES CELEBRATES BILL WITHERS
MARCH 13-14



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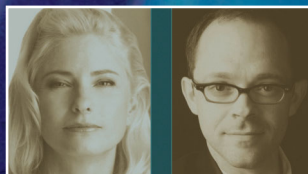
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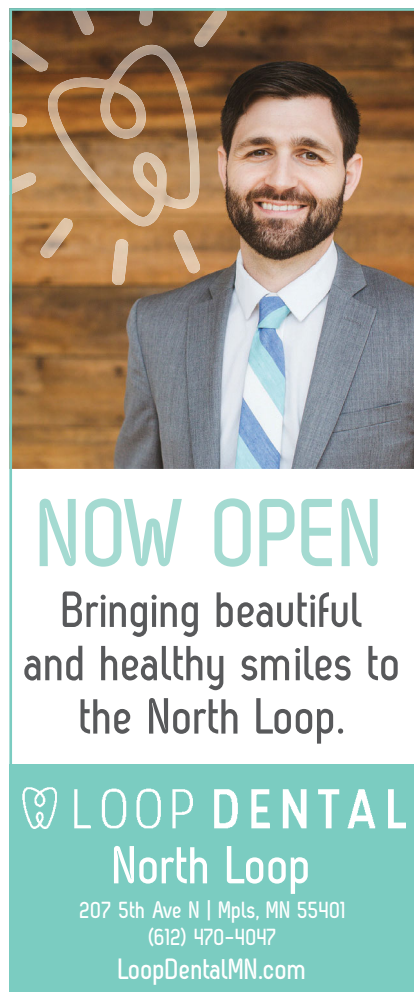
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Change of Heart

For Lynn and Zach, a childless married couple, extramarital relationships are a way to expand their family. They also help Zach (who identifies as queer) better understand the clients at Zach's private therapy practice, Sex from the Center.

For 50-year-old Lynn, all it took to convince her to try non-monogamy was a shoulder massage from a man at a party. As his hands kneaded her pale skin, she felt arousal stirring. It surprised her that she could feel such a thing in a way that didn't detract from her love for her spouse of seven years, Zach. "It felt so separate and compartmentalized and like it cast no shadow [on my marriage]," Lynn recalls. "I had that sense of security and that sense of expansive love."

Zach and Lynn's relationship began in 2004 on Soulmatch, a Yahoo! personals dating site that no longer exists. Within six months of meeting, the couple got engaged and bought a house together. A Quaker wedding followed. Zach had never had an explicitly monogamous relationship before, but Lynn wasn't interested in polyamory. In fact, her opinion on open marriage at the time was "no fucking way." However, "I always had it in the back of my mind that if I felt really secure, I would consider it," she says.

Then the shoulder massage happened. Around the same time, Zach's therapy clients were exploring dating apps. To understand them better, Zach set up a profile. Lynn wanted one, too. Initially, they sought partners for affectionate touch only, but one thing led to another and soon they were each going on three to four dates per week with other people.

Zach currently has two girlfriends, relationships of four years and one year, respectively. "When Zach began seeing a new girlfriend, it added to the quality of our relationship," Lynn says. "They could do things socially that I wasn't interested in doing. Zach suddenly had a very rich social life, which I was so grateful for."

In 2016, Lynn's relationships with two steady boyfriends ended. Despite the emotional support of her husband, "I still had to go through all of that same

heartache," she says. She currently has "sexy fun" with a play partner once a month but they don't keep in touch during the week, discuss their families, or do social activities together. She's eager for more. "I'm ready to get back out there," she says.

Tying the Knot

Lin (a stage name) and Howard*, both in their 30s and married for two years, have a pair of roommates: Lin's ex-boyfriend and a bisexual woman who moved in two weeks after they started dating her. The couple also entertains a rotating cast of play partners that they meet in the kink community; in fact, they often act as each other's wing-person.

"I love sitting down to a table with a group of friends and going, 'Oh, I've slept with everybody here!'" says Lin, a 32-year-old with neon rainbow hair, retro glasses,

and purple sparkly lipstick. Lin is blunt and occasionally she releases a laugh that seems to originate more from nerves than humor. She's polite but with a cut-throat aura about her, like a cool, punk babysitter with a stern side.

The kink educator and photographer has identified as polyamorous her whole life. She met her husband, Howard, a 37-year-old straight man in IT, while

Lynn and Zach opened up their marriage to expand their family.

he was in an open marriage. After four years of dating Lin, Howard divorced his wife. "It was pretty clear that we were a lot more compatible than they were," Lin says. The couple married on New Year's Eve of 2015, and in addition to their co-habiting partners, they date several others.

"It definitely keeps him entertained," Lin says. "He loves exploring new people and coming back. For me, it satisfies that bisexual preference. I love women—I actually prefer women."

Lin believes having multiple partners in no way diminishes the specialness of sex. "I think sex is always special," she says. "It's someone seeing you naked and communicating with someone about your wants/needs, and theirs. It's just a warmer relationship with more people."

The couple doesn't invite just anyone into their bed, however. "When I okay somebody, I've probably known them for like five years," Lin says. "Vetting is a big thing in the kink community and I use it for everything else, just making sure this person isn't going to abuse anyone, isn't going to cause any ridiculous drama, stuff like that." Apparently, it's been effective because she says she's had "no major heartbreaks."

In addition to her nonprofit office day job, Lin performs in A Stitch of Trouble, a rope-suspension and bondage performance duo. (She's Stitch; her performance partner is Trouble.) "I tie people up and off the ground," she explains. With wrists behind the back, ropes strung across the chest and intricately diamonded across the



PIERRE WARE

“

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back, one can be suspended from a big ring and spun before an audience. Lin teaches these skills, sometimes known as “shibari,” at Open Minds Fusion Studio.

“People like it for a variety of reasons, including sex, dominance, and for the sheer aesthetics of it. It’s a challenge. It’s an art form,” she says. While Lin is no longer sexually involved with her live-in ex-boyfriend, they still do kink together. “I definitely can tie someone up and suspend them from the ceiling without it being sexual,” she says.

Lin and Howard currently have home-building plans that include movable hard-points (installed hardware that supports suspension from the ceiling) and 22-foot ceilings so she can practice rope work at home.

“The higher ceilings will allow us to develop and practice more complex acts,” Lin says, adding that the possibility for throwing more elaborate parties in the space will “definitely up the number of orgies I find myself in.”

Risky Business

Jealousy is the most common challenge in non-monogamous relationships, and it has multiple manifestations. For Lynn, it was particularly prevalent regarding one of Zach’s girlfriends. Lynn felt threatened by how sexy, smart, and fun to be around the girlfriend was. “She seemed to have a lot of power over Zach and Zach talked about her a lot... I always came to the same conclusion: ‘They’re just too happy!’ Then I would feel guilty for wanting to deny them happiness,” Lynn says.

Lynn has also struggled with comparing relationships and scorekeeping. “A situation of support and sharing their jubilation can very easily flip into jealousy,” she says.

While Andy believes jealousy is a social construct, that didn’t prevent her from experiencing it when the married couple she’s seeing purchased the same cut and color of panties for another woman during a four-month breakup with Andy. “I think I was thrown off by it because it felt as though they were replacing me with this new girl—just buying her the same stuff. Also, it made me feel as though the gift wasn’t as special to me because they just repeated it for this new woman,” Andy says, though she’s quick to add that moment seems laughable in hindsight. “I don’t know that I’d react in the same way if it happened again.”

Dishonesty and lack of transparency are other common hurdles. Lynn has communicated with several men who say they’re poly on the phone or online, but when they meet in person, the men admit their wives don’t know and request that she be “discreet” about their relation-

ships. She’s also encountered “cowboys,” monogamous people who go along with the idea of non-monogamy in the hopes of wrangling non-monogamous partners into a monogamous relationship. Now she’s wary of starting a relationship with someone who has never considered or tried a non-monogamous relationship before.

STD prevention—or lack thereof—has been problematic for Andy. She contracted chlamydia from a boyfriend and had to alert the two married couples she’s been involved with to get tested. “Thank God none of them had gotten anything,” she says. “It’s annoying no matter when you get an STD, but you don’t want to disappoint people you love. Then they’re questioning your boundaries and their honesty.”

Both Andy and Lynn reported losing friendships over their lifestyles, in part because conversations surrounding non-monogamy can be upsetting for those who’ve been cheated on before, and don’t understand that non-monogamy and cheating are not one and the same.

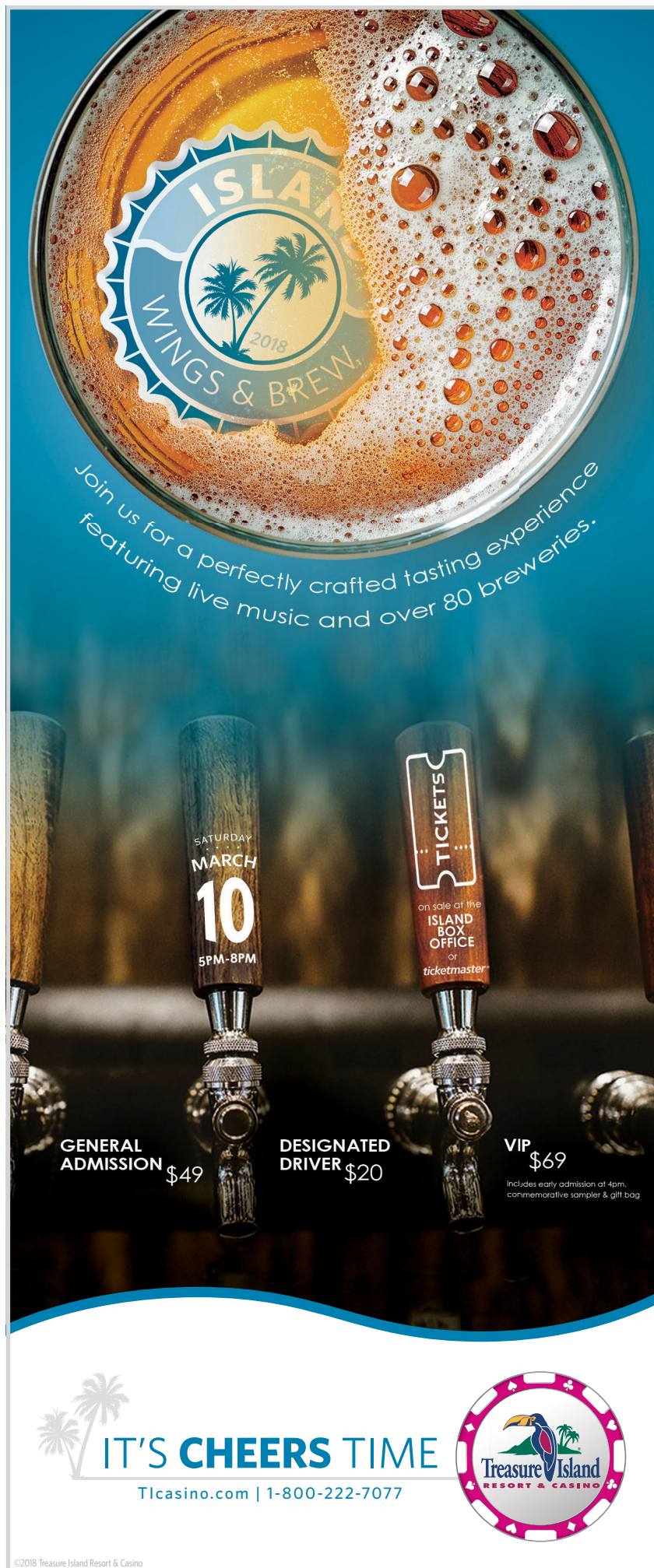
More non-monogamy hitches: the clock and the calendar. “Remembering where you’re supposed to be, with whom, can be hard sometimes,” Lin says. Fitting everyone in can be rough, especially when there’s a new partner—and all that intoxicating infatuation energy—in the mix.

Balancing needs between multiple partners can be stressful, too. If a lover’s grandparent dies, for example, one may want to rush over to support them but already has plans with someone else. Or perhaps one’s partner was broken up with by someone else and now they’re not in the mood for a fun, lighthearted date.

Lynn occasionally feels like Zach is spread too thin. The couple experienced friction recently over the amount of communication between Zach and the newer girlfriend, whom Lynn says “does not feel like an enhancement. It feels like a distraction. It feels like instead of a whole husband, I have a third of a husband.” She quickly clarifies that this “isn’t the whole of how I feel about it. There are aspects of it that I heartily enjoy and appreciate and encourage, but there’s this little tinge of difficulty.”

For Lin, the biggest challenge in her arrangement has been a disability. She has lingering traumatic brain injury from a car accident, which causes her to sleep a lot and requires various medications and frequent doctors appointments. When she’s wiped out, the best her partners can hope for is to nap together.

Some of the stumbling blocks non-monogamous people face are downright mundane: delegating yard work, cat care, splitting bills. In other words, they’re doing much of the same relationship legwork as their monogamous counterparts.



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One Foot in the Closet

Non-monogamy has yet to gain widespread acceptance in American society. Whispers circulate through the community about parents with litigious exes who might use one's non-monogamous status to challenge custody rulings. Rumors of people who've lost jobs or have been shunned by their families abound. The people using pseudonyms in this article insisted on doing so because of fears of retaliation from family members or employers. Because of the judgment and shame surrounding non-monogamous arrangements, many practitioners choose to keep their relationships on the down-low.

Rob's kids took the news of his unconventional arrangement with Karen and Jim in stride. Karen and Jim's kids were wary; they needed assurance that Karen wasn't cheating on, or hurting, their dad. Though all three adults consider themselves "out" to the theater community, it's been an ongoing struggle to figure out how to be openly polyamorous among their families and friends, and in public.

"I don't like feeling like we have to restrain ourselves from being normally affectionate so that people won't talk," Karen says, though she admits she behaves differently around people who do know and people who don't.

"[Rob] is my partner. I feel like I need to talk about it. I can't tell a story about my life that doesn't include him at this point." When they do disclose, they prefer to do so via instant messenger so people can have their reactions in private. So far, the ones who do know have not reacted negatively.

Lynn and Zach sent a letter out to family members early on explaining their arrangement just in case they were seen in public on dates with other people. The response was mostly silence. They have since distanced themselves from their families to avoid discussions or conflicts about their non-monogamous status. Lynn wishes that wasn't the case. "I would like the right among my family to bring my other relationships to family gatherings," she says. "But right now, it's an 'absolutely not' situation."

Lin says her family isn't usually fazed by alternate forms of relationships, but when she disclosed her status to her mother via

Facebook, her mother stopped talking to her for two weeks. Then, she called Lin and asked if Lin's father touched her as a child. He hadn't.

"Acceptance isn't quite in her wheelhouse," Lin says.

Lin's father died when she was only 20 years old, but Lin says, "He would have loved hearing about my adventures in kink and polyamory." Her in-laws still don't know, though Lin wonders if they've figured it out and just haven't addressed it yet. When it comes to co-workers at her day job at a local nonprofit, she keeps her status private.

Many of Andy's family members, including her mother and step-father, do not know about her status, but her sister and some cousins are aware and accepting. She is also open at her teaching job, though a couple of older co-workers have made snide comments when she's mentioned non-monogamy. "I just chalk that up to not

being educated on it properly," she says. Andy is especially vocal about her status to her @ladyroue Twitter followers. "If you don't like me because of who I'm dating, because of this lifestyle, then you don't need to be in my life," she says. "Life is too short to not have my story told and to not be an inspira-

tion for other people."

Reflecting on her metamorphosis from adulterer to non-monogamist over the past four years, Andy says it's changed how she views the world. She now runs a coaching practice called the Growth Arc to help others maneuver their relationships. Still, there's something missing. "I've never had a primary partner, when they've wanted to pursue another relationship, do it ethically, with full knowledge and consent," she says. "I feel sad, like, am I going to find someone that wants to be my primary partner?"

For non-monogamists, more is better—more love, more sex, more connection. But often with that comes more conflict, more heartbreak, more disappointment. The emotional toll non-monogamy can take on participants is immense—as are the rewards if the arrangement succeeds.

"This has the potential to be an exceptionally stable situation if the people are right," says Karen. "It doesn't work for everybody. I would never say that it is better than monogamy. I like monogamy. Monogamy is complicated enough. It really is. But when polyamory works, it can work beautifully." ■

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MAKE TIME

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BY HANNAH SAYLE

So, you eat your sushi with your hands. Chopsticks fumble around between your fingers like skis tumbling down a hill.

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Consider that a caveat to our next statement: There is a particular joy in visiting an authentic sushi bar, with its rituals and details and, yes, rules. Slipping into the grooves cast for you by centuries of chefs feels comforting; old customs hold value, rocks of necessity pressed for generations into gems of cultural traditions.

Kado no Mise, which opened last year in the former Origami space in the North Loop neighborhood of Minneapolis, brings us to this place. Here, we want to be better diners. More patient. Much of Japanese dining has this effect on us—the courting of a sushi meal, the bento box's tidy compartments—but Kado no Mise is special.

The environment, based on the Edomae-style sushi bars of Tokyo, is instantly soothing: bright and simple, bordering on the ascetic. Each meal begins with a small cup of somewhat flavorless buckwheat tea, an oddity in almost any other dining room. But

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here, having just wiped your hands clean on

your freshly steamed towel, it feels natural, even necessary. You'll want to cleanse your palate of the noise of the outside world, and if you crammed an Egg McMuffin into your face on the drive to work, you'll want to cleanse that, too.

Without question, the best way to enjoy Kado no Mise is to sit at the sushi bar (open to walk-ins, though also available for reservations) and ask for the omakase. You will be putting your trust in the chef, who will serve you, dish by dish, a sampling of the kitchen's finest, though we were able to suggest a price limit (the omakase can run all the way up to \$200 per person), and choose a mix of cold and hot plates.

Our chef, Jeff, who was younger than we expected, surprised us even further by turning to the kitchen and speaking fluently in Japanese.

"My mom is Japanese," he explained. "She made us learn to speak it."

In fact, we noticed a far greater number of Japanese employees and diners than we typically see in the Twin Cities. At the risk of leaning on that dining cliché of eating where the experts do, we found this a good omen.

After the buckwheat tea, our meal began with an amuse bouche of salmon with a wakame and cucumber salad, followed immediately by the first plate: a seabream liver pâté marinated in sake, mirin, and soy. Fish liver is a delightful combination of the rich, buttery texture of foie gras, with a slight fish oil flavor in lieu of the metallic hints you find in land-based offal. Before the deluge of nigiri, we were served a tiny bowl of a Kado no Mise menu staple, Chawanmushi. A savory egg custard with king crab, ginkgo nuts, and mushrooms, it's simple and charming, and wholly unlike anything we'd eaten before. You can also find it during happy hour with a generous pour of sake for \$14.

The sushi that followed is some of the best we've had in the Twin Cities, sequenced from lighter to stronger flavors, as one might do with cheeses or wines. Fluke with chili, chives, and ponzu led to charred Japanese barracuda, which was followed by salt-cured horse mackerel topped with ginger; each piece was carefully assembled and explained by our chef before being handed to us. We were so enthralled with the melt-in-your-mouth Toro (fatty bluefin tuna) that we ordered it in roll form, with green onion. You should do the same.

The omakase concludes with a bowl of udon noodle soup, a straightforward but satisfying end to a stream of raw dishes. Desserts are not the focus here, but we were happily surprised when a bowl of

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FOOD



"sorbets" landed on the counter. More the flaky, crystalline texture of granita, the sake and green tea flavored ices were only mildly sweet, a fitting cap to an evening of thoughtful flavors.

The sense of dining as meditation only heightens in the upstairs dining room, where a more formal kaiseki, or traditional multi-course Japanese dinner, is offered. The reservations-only meal draws inspiration from the Japanese tea ceremony, with beautiful dishes that reflect the seasons, all orchestrated by chef Shigeyuki Furukawa. The kaiseki is only available on Friday and Saturday after 5 p.m., and you'll spend several hours working your way through the 10 courses.

Adjacent to the kaiseki, a dark cocoon of a whisky bar called Gori Gori Peku is open to any and all, no reservations required. Sink into a leather chair and bask in the very low glow of the backlit bar while you find your new favorite Japanese whisky. The menu is a sprawling list of spirits, served straight or mixed into a simple cocktail.

As for the drinks downstairs, sake is predictably the focus, with 13 selections available by the glass or carafe. By contrast, only five beers are available, four Japanese imports in bottles or cans, and Sapporo on draft. A tidy selection of cocktails from the downstairs bar includes just five drinks developed by Dan Oskey of Tattersall Distillery.

Aside from an omakase dinner, our favorite time to call on Kado no Mise is at lunch, when the calm dining room is a welcome reprieve from the harried workday. Order the yakizakana (\$16), grilled yellowtail with miso soup, delicate julienned grilled vegetables, and rice. Or try the kabocha salad with squash, mushrooms, greens, and a ginger dressing you will want to guzzle but won't. (Better, more patient diners, remember?) Finish with tea and recognize that you deserve food that takes time and thought and attention. And the Twin Cities deserves more restaurants like Kado no Mise. ☐



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89.3 THE CURRENT PRESENTS
JEREMY MESSERSMITH
WITH MONICA LAPLANTE

89.3 THE CURRENT, ELECTRIC FETUS AND SURLY BREWING PRESENT
TRANSMISSION: THE '80S
A NIGHT OF POP/ROCK/ NEW WAVE/HIP-HOP/R&B
FT. DJ JAKE RUDH

APR 03
PHILLIP PHILLIPS:
THE MAGNETIC TOUR
WITH THE BALLROOM THIEVES

APR 05
89.3 THE CURRENT PRESENTS
MARGARET GLASPY
WITH BUCK MEIK

APR 07
89.3 THE CURRENT PRESENTS
TY SEGALL

89.3 THE CURRENT PRESENTS
BUILT TO SPILL
WITH RITUALS OF MINE, BLACK BELT EAGLE SCOUT

APR 11
THE WOOD BROTHERS
WITH NICKI BLUHM

APR 14
MARGO PRICE
NOWHERE FAST TOUR
WITH BLACKFOOT GYPSIES

APR 15
CIGARETTES AFTER SEX

APR 16
MATT AND KIM
WITH TOKYO POLICE CLUB

APR 17
HOUNDMOUTH

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UP NEXT PALACE THEATRE

BEST CONCERT VENUE - CITY PAGES 2017

MAR 17
AN EVENING WITH GLEN HANSARD

APR 03
DAN AUERBACH AND THE EASY EYE SOUND REVUE
FT. ROBERT FINLEY, SHANNON SHAW W/ SHANNON AND THE CLAMS

APR 06+07
THE DECEMBERISTS

APR 22
LORD HURON

MAY 06
DR. DOG
CRITICAL EQUATION TOUR
W/ SON LITTLE

MAY 09
FLATBUSH ZOMBIES
SEE YOU IN HELL
W/ KIRK KNIGHT, NYCK CAUTION

UP NEXT 7TH ST ENTRY

AUTOGRAF
W/ RAMZOID, EDAMAME
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

LAVENDER DAUGHTER
RECORD RELEASE SHOW
W/ SHADOW PARTY, BOOMTOWN RIOT
THURSDAY, MARCH 1

EARLY EYES
W/ 26 BATSI, HEART TO GOLD
FRIDAY, MARCH 2

WHY KHALIQ
W/ STUDENT 1, DESTINY ROBERTS, KALEEM THE DREAM, DJ MAC TIMS
SATURDAY, MARCH 3

UP NEXT TURF CLUB

BEST MUSIC RESIDENCY, BEST JUKEBOX - CITY PAGES 2017

MARGOT
W/ CEDAR, JUNIOR VARSITY, ALMIGHTY AMERICAN
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

NIGHTMARES ON WAX
'SHAPE THE FUTURE' LIVE TOUR 2018
W/ AARON RICE
THURSDAY, MARCH 1

SUNNY SWEENEY
FRIDAY, MARCH 2

JORDAN RAKEI
W/ MINA MOORE
SATURDAY, MARCH 3

THE BIG LEBOWSKI
20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY WATCH PARTY AND COSTUME CONTEST
TUESDAY, MARCH 6

JULIAN MANZARA BAND
ILLUSION VALLEY, LASKA
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7

THEO KATZMAN AND CORY WONG
W/ BRIDGET KEARNEY (LAKE STREET DIVE)
THURSDAY, MARCH 8

SCREAMING FEMALES
W/ RADIATOR HOSPITAL, KITTEN FOREVER
FRIDAY, MARCH 9

UP NEXT OTHER VENUES

WHY?
W/ FLORIST
THE CEDAR
FRIDAY, MARCH 2

KYLE KINANE
W/ SEAN JORDAN
THE CEDAR
TUESDAY, MARCH 6
SECOND SHOW ADDED (18+)

THE NOSLEEP PODCAST
W/ CREEPY PODCAST
THE CEDAR
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7

AN EVENING WITH NADA SURF
CELEBRATING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF 'LET GO'
FINE LINE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14

COLTER WALL
W/ THE LOCAL HONEYS
FINE LINE
TUESDAY, MARCH 27

DAVID HUCKFELT (OF THE PINES)
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THURSDAY, MARCH 29

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FRIDAY Free beer at Battle of the Brews **P. 24**

SATURDAY Vintage bikes at Freewheel **P. 25**

TUESDAY The Walker's design series returns **P. 25**

THURSDAY 3.1

COMEDY

TIM MEADOWS

THE JOKE JOINT COMEDY CLUB

At 10 seasons, Tim Meadows' run on *Saturday Night Live* was one of the longest of any cast member. Still, he's not often recognized by the general public. "People think I'm Don Cheadle," he tells an audience. "I get that a lot, especially from white people. 'Hey, Don Cheadle, I loved *Iron Man 2*!' Black people see me they're like, 'Hey, I don't know who you are.'" Meadows' career stretches back to the mid-'80s, when he first started doing improv and standup in his hometown, Detroit. "I grew up in a rough part of Detroit," he says. "It's called Detroit." 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday; 9:45 p.m. Friday and Saturday. \$17-\$28. 801 Sibley Memorial Highway, Lilydale; 651-330-9078. **Through Saturday —P.F. WILSON**

BARHOPPING

CRIBBAGE NIGHT

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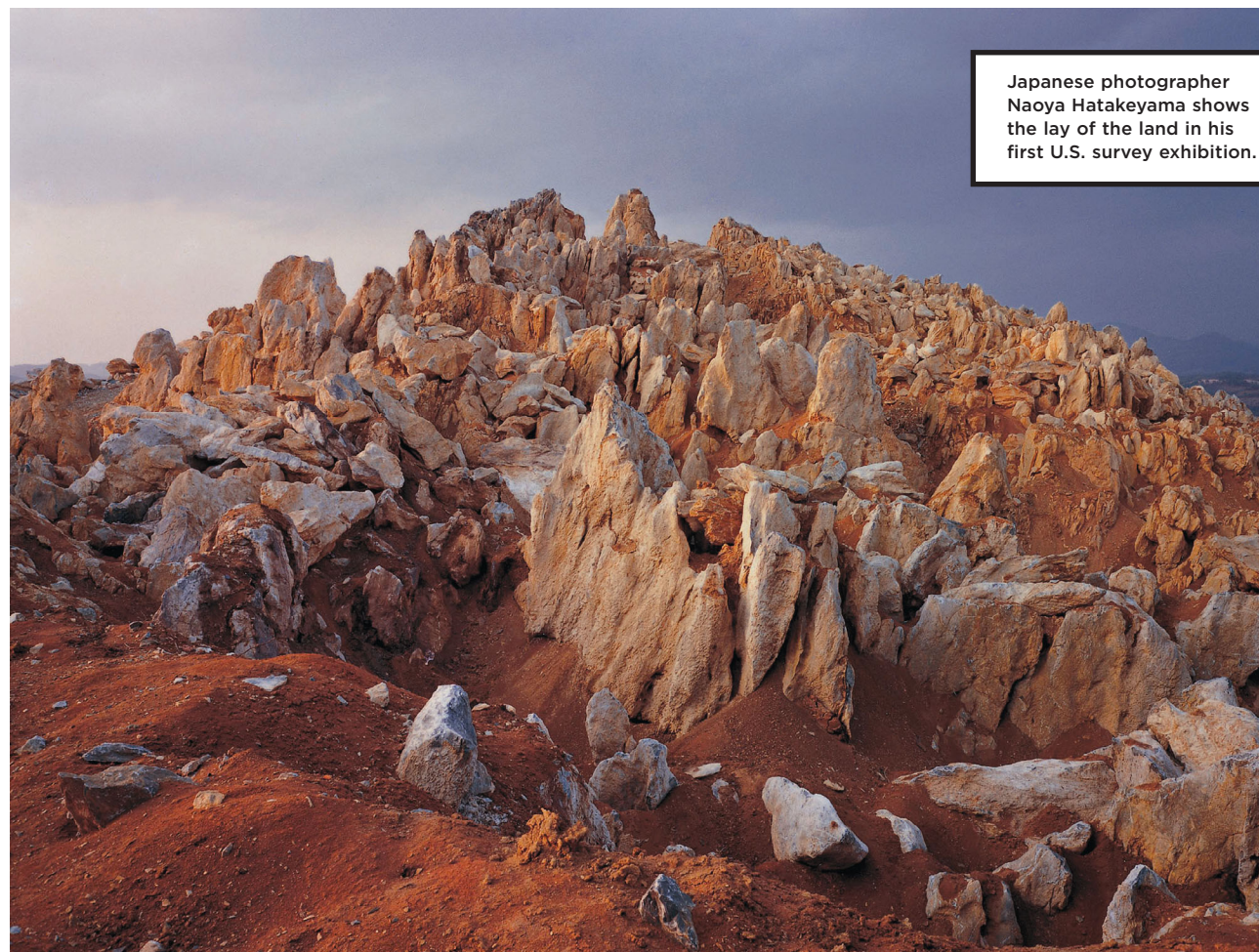
Cribbage is an excellent game to play while drinking. The rules are simple enough to follow, even while buzzed. Think of it a bit like a pleasant combo of poker and rummy, with a board used to keep score. On Thursdays, Utepils will host a cribbage tournament where you can play the game while enjoying a pint. Each evening is limited to 32 competitors, with the winner taking home a \$50 gift card. To opt in, simply buy a drink and let the bartender know that you are here to crush all your competitors (politely—this is a game that originated in England, after all). 7 p.m. Thursday nights. Free. 225 Thomas Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-249-7800. **—JESSICA ARMBRUSTER**

THEATER

CONSTANCE IN THE DARKNESS: A MUSICAL IN MINIATURE

OPEN EYE FIGURE THEATRE

Open Eye Figure Theatre's latest is an all-ages treat. When Constance's mother goes missing, she begins a



Japanese photographer Naoya Hatakeyama shows the lay of the land in his first U.S. survey exhibition.

NAOYA HATAKEYAMA

quest to find her. Though she has her astronomy knowledge and a telescope to aid her, this is no easy task: She's up against the Evil Queen Harmonica and her empire of saxophones. What follows is a tale of whimsy and adventure as she travels the constellations of outer space in search of her mother. To create these fantastical worlds, the production features a variety of puppetry, live music, and a cast that includes local talents Maren Ward and Emily Zimmer. Find tickets at 72311.blackbaudhosting.com. 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays; 4 p.m. Sundays. \$15-\$20; \$12 kids. 506 E. 24th St., Minneapolis; 612-874-6338. **Through March 11 —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER**

COMEDY

NATE BARGATZE

ACME COMEDY CO.

"I like to think of myself as a storyteller, but in joke form," says comedian Nate Bargatze. "I don't think I'm a storyteller like Ron White. My longest joke is like two minutes. But now I'm trying to look at a topic from every angle." The son of a successful magician, Bargatze first got into comedy via improv with a friend. The format wasn't for him, but he soon discovered standup. These days, he covers subjects that include travel and science. "I don't believe in science," he says. "I don't understand it, so it's easier to just not believe it." He gives an example of why he feels this way. "I read where they said

cockroaches are 350 million years old. Are they? Or do you know I don't know how to go figure that out?" Bargatze has logged numerous appearances on *The Tonight Show* and *Conan*, and his fan base includes fellow comics Marc Maron and Jim Gaffigan. 18+. 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday; 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. \$18-\$33. 708 N. First St., Minneapolis; 612-338-6393. **Through Saturday —P.F. WILSON**

ART/PERFORMANCE

REFLECTION HOUSE

NORTHROP KING BUILDING

A house of mirrors gets reconceived as a contemporary art piece and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 ►

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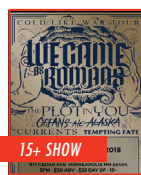
18+ SHOW

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MARCH 8



18+ SHOW

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FEAT. 3 PILL MORNING
AND SMILING POLITELY
MARCH 3



15+ SHOW

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FEAT. THE PLOT IN YOU,
OCEANS ATE ALASKA,
CURRENTS AND
TEMPTING FATE
MARCH 4



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A-LIST



The Leopard is
one of Visconti's
most celebrated
films.

20TH CENTURY FOX

CONTINUED FROM THURSDAY ►

performance for *Reflection House*. Choreographer Jennifer Glaws' latest work takes place inside an interactive installation that invites audiences into a mirror-filled environment where they'll watch themselves as well as the show. Glaws has collaborated with a team of designers and five other dancers to explore notions of time and the delineation between personal self and being part of a group. There will also be free sessions outside of performances so that visitors can explore the installation. Open hours will be this Thursday, March 1, from 5 to 9 p.m., as well as one hour before and after each show. 7:30 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday. \$5-\$25 (pay-as-able). 1500 Jackson St. NE, Gallery 332, Minneapolis. **Through March 16 —SHEILA REGAN**

FRIDAY 3.2

BEER

SECOND ANNUAL BATTLE OF THE BREWS

TOP TEN LIQUORS WOODBURY

There's free beer at this Friday night party. The catch? Unless you already live there, you have to make the trek to Woodbury. But at this epic beer competition revelers will be invited to sample a handful of local brews in order to determine who will win the battle. Tastings will include efforts from Fair State, Indeed, Lagunitas, Founders, Bad Weather, Lupulin, Deschutes, Utepils, and Fulton, who will be defending their win from last year. There's a fancy trophy at stake here, so vote carefully. Admission is free, but you'll want to RSVP to reserve a spot. Visit www.eventbrite.com for details and more info. 21+. 6 to 8

p.m. Free. 9887 Norma Ln., Woodbury; 651-501-1199. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

FILM

LUCHINO VISCONTI: RESOLUTE MAESTRO

TRYLON CINEMA

Identifying a signature style from the films of Italian director Luchino Visconti is no less challenging than attempting to summarize the man's idiosyncratic character. Defiantly open both in terms of his personal relationships as a gay man and his political affiliations as a communist during World War II, Visconti followed the unapologetic path of his own ungovernable sensibilities. For all the stylistic diversions of his storied filmography, Visconti's movies tend to feature characters with headstrong beliefs driving their actions, regardless of their class or status. A three-film series at Trylon Cinema, Luchino Visconti: Resolute Maestro, delves into the director's philosophical perspective. One of Visconti's most celebrated films, *The Leopard* (1963), is a sweeping period piece centered on a charismatic member of the Sicilian aristocracy who accepts the inevitability (and even necessity) of revolutionary change. Less screened, particularly in its non-excised four-hour entirety, is *Ludwig* (1973), an even more ambitious epic concerning the conflicting convictions of King Ludwig II of Bavaria, whose dashed aspirations and repressed sexuality led to a tragic downfall. *Le Notti Bianche* (1957) looks to Dostoevsky's *White Nights* as inspiration for a love triangle in which the inevitable strains of committed relationships dash the ideals of romantic devotion. 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, Mondays through Wednesdays; 4 p.m. Sundays; 7:30 p.m. Monday, March 4; 9:15 p.m.



Company Wang Ramirez members dance into thin air.

FRANK SZAFINSKI

Sunday, March 11. \$8. 3258 Minnehaha Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-424-5468.
Through March 13 —BRAD RICHASON

SATURDAY 3.3

DANCE

COMPANY WANG RAMIREZ

NORTHROP

Honji Wang was raised in Germany by Korean parents, where she trained in ballet but was enamored with hip-hop and martial arts. (She also performed on Madonna's Rebel Heart Tour.) Sébastien Ramirez was born in the South of France, where he excelled at hip-hop (as a b-boy prodigy) and learned aerial rigging. Their combined dance styles and choreographic invention result in highly physical works with an ethereal theatricality. The piece on this program, *Borderline*, juxtaposes a grounded earthiness with the fluidity of weightlessness. Set to original music by lacrymboy, the work transforms the stage into a scene of visual poetry in which floating shapes and gravity-defying motion escalate the artistry. 7:30 p.m. \$18-\$46. 84 Church St. SE, Minneapolis; 612-624-2345. —**CAMILLE LEFEVRE**

BEER

BIG BAD BEER FEST 2018

NEW BOHEMIA

Beer pairs great with bratwurst and sausage. New Bohemia, a local chain featuring all-natural sausages, was born of this mentality. Their restaurants mimic the industrial vibe of taprooms, and their draft lines double down on this appreciation. This Saturday Big Bad Beer Fest, at the Golden Valley location, presents over two dozen big, bold, dark beers on tap (and available as

flights). This includes vintage verticals of imperial stout; popular winter warmers like Indeed's Rum King and Bent Paddles' barrel-aged Double Shot Double Black; and, yes, some lighter pilsners for those who don't want such a heavy and high-alcohol refreshment with their cured meat. 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Free. 8040 Olson Memorial Highway, Golden Valley; 763-544-1882. —**LOREN GREEN**

BIKES

VINTAGE BIKE SHOW

FREEWHEEL BIKE

This might sound crazy, but bike season is just around the corner. Yes, there are mighty folks who ride year-round, but not all bikes are meant for all seasons. To celebrate the coming months, which will include 30 Days of Biking and a ton of cycling-themed events, Freewheel Bike is hosting a bike show where you can ogle rides and chat with owners, the way classic-car owners do. Bringing a vintage bike scores you a \$20 gift card to the store. There will also be some friendly competition, with awards for best in show. If you have a vintage vehicle you'd like to show off, be sure to email info@freewheelbike.com. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free. 1812 S. Sixth St., Minneapolis; 612-339-2219. —**JESSICA ARMBRUSTER**

ART/GALLERY

ALTERED LANGUAGE DICTIONARIES

TRAFFIC ZONE CENTER FOR VISUAL ART

With her global awareness as an immigrant of Croatian descent, Minneapolis artist Vesna Kittelson astutely brings her concerns about conflict and violence into fabulous sculptural expression. In this exhibition, she has started with the written word.

Her concept is the Tower of Babel. Her intention is to explore how language, in today's politics, is consistently mistranslated, misconstrued, and otherwise manipulated to obscure authentic meaning. Dictionaries are her medium. She transforms them into other three-dimensional objects with materials including tar, gold leaf, encaustic, and adhesive letters. The result recontextualizes language's potential in the 21st century. There will be a public reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, March 3. Free. 250 Third Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-247-1244.
Through April 6 —CAMILLE LEFEVRE

SUNDAY 3.4

ART/MUSEUM

EXCAVATING THE FUTURE CITY: PHOTOGRAPHS BY NAOYA HATAKEYAMA

MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ART

The points at which nature and urbanization converge—along with such attendant impacts as destruction and construction, transformation and re-formation—have long been the concern of Japanese photographer Naoya Hatakeyama, who still shoots with film. In this survey exhibition, the first in the U.S. on Hatakeyama and his work, 12 of the artist's series will be on view. Presenting an evolutionary vision of Japan's cities on a meticulously detailed yet grand scale, the show includes 100 works created in the past 30 years. Topographies ranging from close-ups inside blasted quarries to serene aerial shots of urban development illustrate the scope of documentation with which Hatakeyama records his insights. Free. 2400 Third Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-870-3131. **Through July 22 —CAMILLE LEFEVRE**

TUESDAY 3.6

THEATER

SCHOOL OF ROCK

ORPHEUM THEATRE

School of Rock (2003) was an ideal vehicle for the manic stylings of Jack Black. As a floundering musician who impersonates a teacher at a prestigious private school, Black's character headbanged through rockstar legacies and musical theory via face-melting guitar solos, all while preaching the integral link between rock and rebellion. In adapting the film to the Broadway stage, producers enlisted Andrew Lloyd Webber, a composer whose popular acclaim would seem to run contrary to the subversive ethos of rock. Few would consider writer Julian Fellowes (*Downton Abbey*) or lyricist Glenn Slater (*Sister Act*, *The Little Mermaid*) to be

malcontented outsiders, either. But rock has always been an ungovernable beast, diverse enough to include both garage-band thrashers and lavishly orchestrated power ballads, all of which can be expected from this traveling production led by the anarchic energy of Rob Collett. Keeping both the spirit of the film and the mythology of the music, *School of Rock* boasts the live musicianship of an unruly ensemble of kids rocking from the ornate Orpheum stage. 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday; 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 2 p.m. Saturday; 1 and 6:30 p.m. Sunday. \$39-\$135. 910 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis; 612-339-7007.

Through March 11 —BRAD RICHASON



ARCHIE LEE COATES IV

TALK

2018 INSIGHTS DESIGN LECTURE SERIES

WALKER ART CENTER

Since Minneapolis has become a hotbed of design, so has the Walker and AIGA's annual Insights Design Lecture Series, which started back in 1987. While the series focuses largely on graphic design, the enthusiasm, freshness, and spirit of innovation that each speaker brings to the podium infuses new possibility in how we see and think about our world. Visual culture, along with its environmental and educational interventions, is always at the fore. When Archie Lee Coates IV of New York City's Playlab kicks off the series, minds will be blown. His work includes creating a graphic identity for a millennial sex-toy company, exhibiting paintings in Reykjavik, making films of Joaquin Phoenix walking, and designing a clothing collection for a nonprofit. He's seemingly done it all—and brilliantly. 7 p.m., Tuesday. \$10-\$24; packages \$30-\$72. 725 Vineland Place, Minneapolis; 612-375-7600. **Through March 27 —CAMILLE LEFEVRE**

LILA DOWNS

MARCH 6 | 7:30PM



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OVER THE RAINBOW

Annihilation is visually dazzling, conceptually thoughtful, and dramatically unsatisfying



Natalie Portman

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

BY KEITH HARRIS

Usually it's the end of a movie that lets you down.

A well-paced action flick collapses into a frenzy of CGI tedium, a tense drama settles for a quick fix to an ethical dilemma, a charming flirtation flops into romcom cliché. But writer/director Alex Garland's contemplative sci-fi head-scratcher *Annihilation* (adapted loosely from the Jeff VanderMeer novel) ends big, building to a genuinely hallucinatory climax, then bowing out with a note of ambiguity. For all the wondrous and grisly sights Garland strews along the way, though, getting to the payoff can be a slog.

When we first meet Natalie Portman's Lena, she's seated, confronted by men in hazmat gear and gawkers safe behind an observation window, clearly a puzzle, possibly a threat. Turns out she's the only member of her party—only the second person ever—to return from within “the shimmer,” a quivering film of rainbow translucence that encases a section of coastal Florida swamp dubbed Area X.

We soon backtrack to when the shimmer's first survivor, Lena's husband Kane (a dour Oscar Isaac), first re-emerged, broken on the inside. Government operatives scoop up the couple, and Lena joins an expedition

into Area X led by the mysterious Dr. Ventress (Jennifer Jason Leigh) that includes a thoughtful Tuva Novotny, a fretful Tessa Thompson, and a lively Gina Rodriguez. All women, you'll notice, which *Annihilation* nicely makes no fuss about. (That said, Garland has also been justifiably criticized for whitewashing: VanderMeer's Lena was Asian, his Ventress Native American. Why can't Hollywood ever get all its politics right in the same movie?)

This all takes way too long—nobody wants to watch Natalie Portman repaint her bedroom and sob to Crosby, Stills & Nash when there's a mysterious phantom zone to be explored. The grim fun starts once we're through the shimmer, which glistens like an oil-tainted puddle—fittingly, because what's beyond is a mix of pollution and beauty. The adventurers lose their sense of time and encounter impossible mutations, both gorgeous kitsch worthy of Lisa Frank and fantastic gore worthy of Francis Bacon. Though chompy, slaving beasties do pounce, Garland doesn't so much generate suspense as stir up a sense of foreboding, a queasiness at what you'll witness as the altered world Lena and the others explore reshapes them from within.

For all the spectacle, Garland seems to stretch for something more human, a meditation on why some people court self-

ANNIHILATION

directed by Alex Garland
now showing, area theaters

destruction. But flashbacks to Lena and Kane in happier times merely provide sketchy justifications for their actions rather than successfully developing their characters, and Lena's fellow team members are given insultingly cartoonish rationales—one's an addict, one's a cutter, one's got a dead daughter, one's got cancer. Portman attempts to suggest depth with a look of dazed concern that modulates into fear, rage, and confusion. Jason Leigh, intoning with hypnotically drowsy lockjaw, fares better, managing to suggest both the single-mindedness of Ahab and the pathos of Brando's Kurtz.

Garland deliberately courts comparison with his betters here, and critics have already obediently picked up on those elements meant to remind us of Tarkovsky and Kubrick. But as in his directorial debut, the promising if overrated AI thriller *Ex Machina*, his brains can't always keep pace with his ambitions. If *Annihilation* falters at the box office and becomes just a trippy midnight movie for zonked undergrads, its champions will claim it sailed over the heads of the cineplex hordes, who in turn will complain that it was slow and pretentious. Neither group will be entirely wrong. **C**

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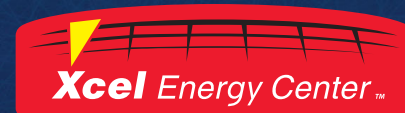


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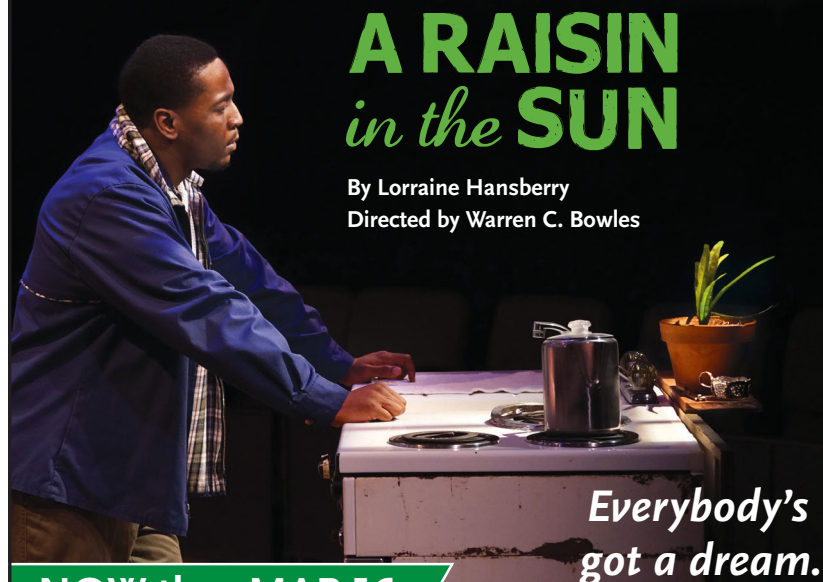


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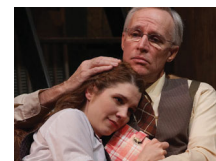
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DAN NORMAN

BY JAY GABLER

In the program of the Guthrie Theater's production of *Indecent*, Pulitzer-winning playwright Paula Vogel recalls being asked to write about the 1923 court battle over Sholem Asch's supposedly obscene play, *God of Vengeance*. "I'd love to write this story," she said, "but I don't think it's about the obscenity trial alone."

The trial, which turned in part on Asch's depiction of a love affair between two women, became just one inflection point in Vogel's play. *Indecent* tracks a half-century of history, from *God of Vengeance* being unveiled in fin de siècle Warsaw to the aged Asch facing a summons from the House Un-American Activities Committee.

Indecent premiered in 2015, and last year it became Vogel's first work to move to Broadway. The new production now playing on the Wurtele Thrust Stage also marks the playwright's long-overdue Guthrie debut.

It's a remarkable feat of storytelling, bursting with confident energy—and stirring genuine pathos—under the direction of Wendy C. Goldberg.

Set designer Arnulfo Maldonado envelops the cast in the crumbling remains of a once-majestic theater. Pouring dust from their pockets to evoke the tragically evanescent nature of existence, several actors rise like ghosts to enact the evening's drama. Three musicians (accordionist Spencer Chandler; violinist Lisa Gutkin, and Pat O'Keefe on clarinet) take the stage as well, completely integrated with the proceedings.

The seven *Indecent* cast members, spanning generations, change characters as time

INDECENT

Guthrie Theater
818 S. Second St., Minneapolis
612-377-2224; through March 24

progresses, and the fact that this is never confusing—even though costume changes are sometimes subtle—is a credit to the acting and direction, as well as to the clarity of Vogel's writing.

Goldberg has assembled a locally rooted dream cast, clearly delighted to be sharing the stage as the ensemble of such a powerful production. A modest Hugh Kennedy plays Asch for most of the show, with the priceless Robert Dorfman balancing levity and gravity in roles including the *God of Vengeance* patriarch. Steven Epp has a memorable turn as a rafters-shaking rabbi, and Ben Cherry plays the stage manager who keeps faith in Asch's vision even when the writer himself has doubts.

Ultimately, though, it's the women who anchor this play. Here, that means Gisela Chipe and Miriam Schwartz as the couple whose onstage embraces echo their parallel offstage romantic relationship. They're joined in the cast by a wry Sally Wingert, who goes toe-to-toe with Dorfman.

Tumbling through time with a wealth of fascinating detail and on-point musical selections, *Indecent* is a riveting exploration of art and intersectionality during a wrenching epoch in world history. Complex but accessible, the Guthrie production touches on profound sadness while simultaneously celebrating the joys of exuberant performance and trusting companionship. **C**

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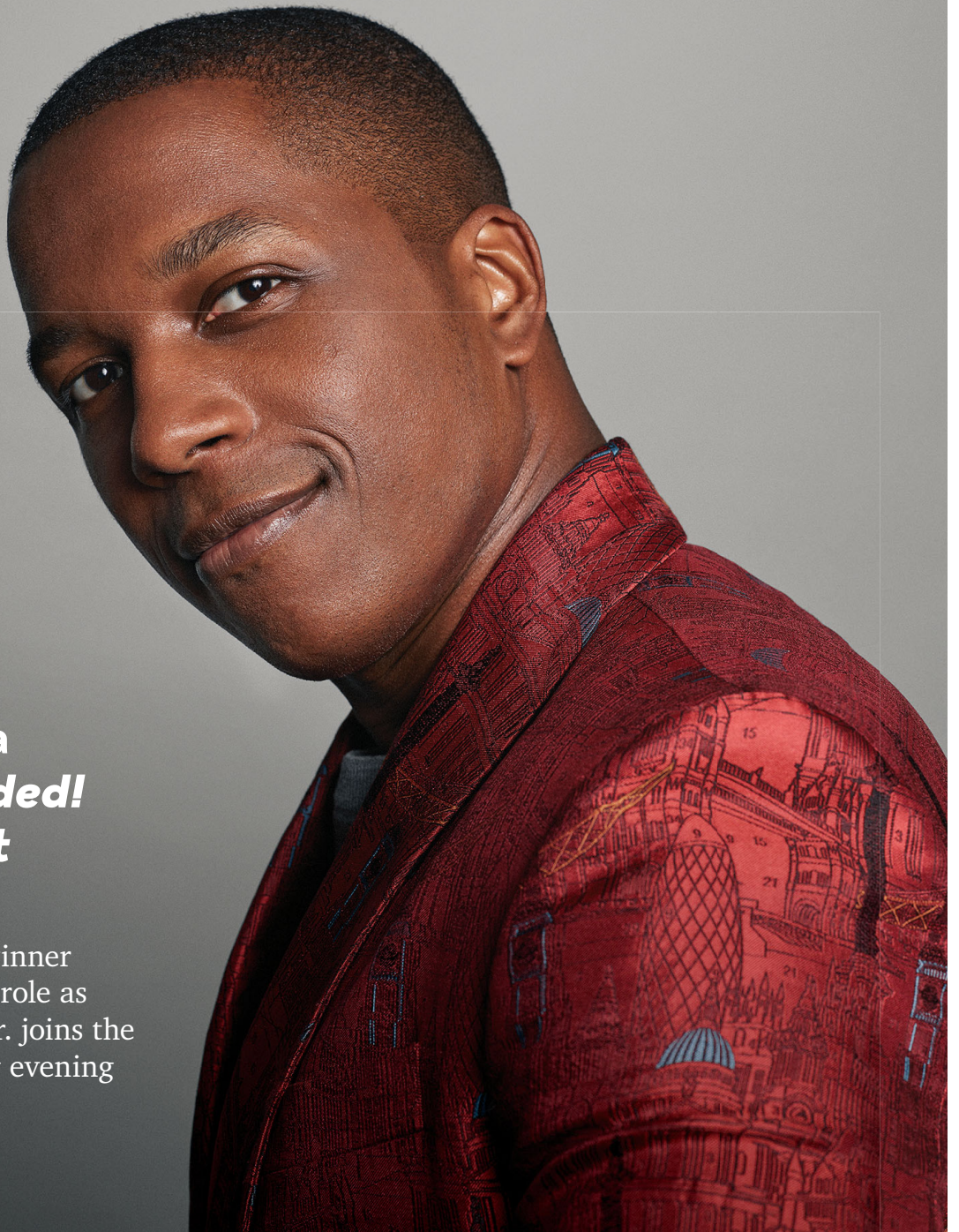
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Photo credit: Nathan Johnson

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STREET *Style*

THE DANDIES PROJECT Book-release party at 514 Studios on February 15. **BY AMY GEE**



KENNETH SCALES

30, CEO OF THE BOWTIE BILLIONAIRE

What are you wearing?

H&M blazer, pants from TJ Maxx, grandfather's shoes, Houston White tie and pocket square.

Describe your style:

Fashion forward with hints of modern classic, billionaire sexy.

Current style inspiration?

GQ and Pinterest.

What style advice do you have for this year?

Be bold, step out, take your shot.



RON BROWN

42, EDUCATOR

What are you wearing?

Vintage thrifted jacket, Levi's pants, Ralph Lauren socks, OUOUVALLEY shoes, KOOWI bow tie from Etsy, Coco and Breezy glasses.

Describe your style:

Urban African chic on a budget, Afrofuturistic chic vibes.

What style rule is meant to be broken?

Matching colors.

What style advice do you have for this year?

Be comfortable in your own skin.



SETH ARYEE

29, PHOTOGRAPHER, STYLIST

What are you wearing?

JF J. Ferrar suit from JCPenney, shirt from Ghana, pin from JoAnn Fabrics, Zara shoes.

Describe your style:

Dapper.

Current style inspiration?

Lino Ieluzzi.

What style rule is meant to be broken?

I don't like wearing belts. I'll either wear suspenders or no belt at all.

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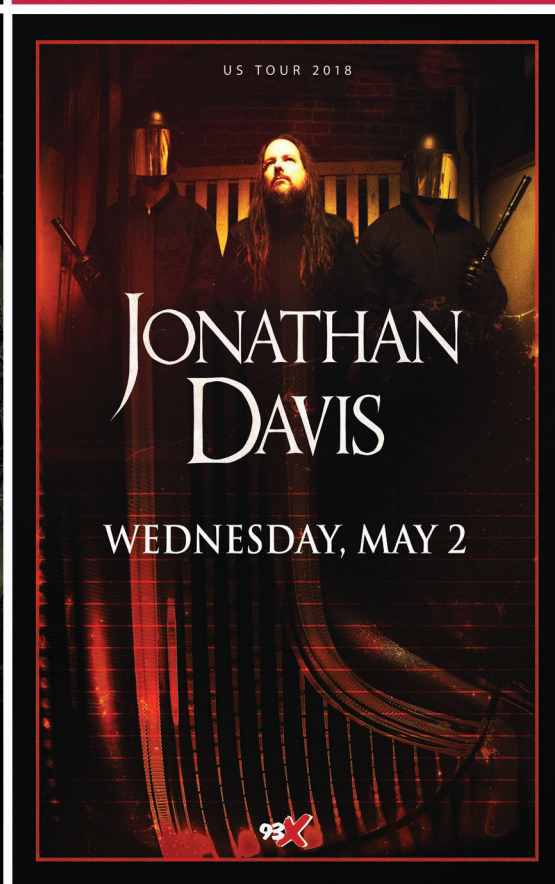
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KILLING YOURSELF TO LIVE

The old Scarlett Taylor can't come to the phone right now



Scarlett Taylor

JERARD FAGERBERG

BY JERARD FAGERBERG

The membrane between drama and melodrama is thin. Drama is sober. Melodrama is exorbitant and indulgent. One is necessary, but the other is just too much fun.

Burnsville goth singer Scarlett Taylor presided over her first three EPs with stony resolve. She was a blithe, existential wayfarer on 2015's *Lucid*. On 2016's *Churches*, she wandered through a graveyard in search of herself; she channelled the phantoms she found into last year's *III*. But with her newest EP, *Heaven Punk* (coming out March 6 on Borderline Musick), Taylor takes a cold chisel to her porcelain romantic veneer.

"I had a lot of fun recording this one," she says with a nefarious smirk. "I never recorded something like this before. All the deep-seated emotions were coming out."

The period between *III* and *Heaven Punk* was a maelstrom for the 21-year-old Taylor. Not only did she end a serious relationship, but her long-estranged mother tried to re-enter her life. And all this happened while she was withdrawing from Concordia University and repositioning her life toward a career in music.

"I've struggled with depression and anxiety my whole life, and music has always been my outlet for that," Taylor says. "I actually don't know my mother. I've never met her, and I feel like that's where a lot of my pain resonates from."

In the past, Taylor translated her trauma into careful, poetic hymns. She'd only ever articulated her sadness and dysphoria, never expressing the rage those feelings fuel, restraining herself to avoid falling into a frenzy of self-destruction.

But that self-destruction is now at the core of *Heaven Punk*. Before the EP was released, Taylor murdered her previous persona. The sacrifice took place in the video for her single "Children of the Sun," in which a group of marauders under the command of a glitter-smeared hedonist named Whiteshade hunt the gothic singer down and execute her. With the sober, composed Taylor out of the picture, Whiteshade takes over.

Heaven Punk is Whiteshade's answer to *Van Wilder*, a nihilistic party fantasy peppered with despondent pop hooks and fucked-up 808s. On "Badmood," she glares judgmentally at her peers, dissolving into a boozy fugue before wishing the

whole party death by fire on "City Sleeping." "Apocalypse" is her violent farewell to sentimentality. But Whiteshade's moment of triumph comes on "Heaven Pink," where she callously proclaims: "Looking in the mirror, and I see the silhouette/Of an ice-cold bitch only seconds from death."

"Whiteshade is basically the evil version of Scarlett Taylor," Taylor explains. "She's the one that gives into the life of fame, greed, money, and sex. She's reckless. She doesn't care what she does."

Taylor's change in attitude also required her to change her sound. Throughout her career, Taylor's angsty folk has suggested Lana Del Rey and Fiona Apple, but *Heaven Punk* integrates many more hip-hop elements. Her longtime collaborator Disraeli Davis wanted to push his prodigy toward pop's moodier corners, and he filled *Heaven Punk*'s songs with tinny hi-hats and distorted horns, emulating *House of Balloons*-era the Weeknd. Davis' son Zay pitched in, dropping caustic raps on "City Sleeping" and "Heaven Pink." Taylor answered in kind, name-dropping Lil B and singing with a sneer.

"This is part of who she is and what she wants to do, so we decided to incorporate

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it on the album," Davis explains. "An artist has to do what they're into and not be locked into a genre. Look at Lady Gaga. She does what she's feeling at that moment. That's what Prince was like."

Davis, who owns dark-pop label Borderline Musick, has been a driver for Taylor's career since he discovered the then-17-year-old at a suburban Subway. He's produced all her releases, and he's helped her mature as a lyricist and performer.

Though Taylor doesn't like to drink or party, she admits she's sometimes pulled into that world, and the disconnect she feels there is what gave birth to Whiteshade. "I've had a little bit of Whiteshade influence in my real life," she says, before adding that it felt "fucking awesome" to finally indulge in the character's devilish abandon.

Taylor and Davis created *Heaven Punk* as a playground for Taylor to live out her melodramatic fantasies. The EP is an opportunity for great personal growth and exploration for the young artist. Every seedy 3 a.m. hookup and flaming cityscape set to song means one less experience the real-life Taylor has to regret.

Taylor has built mental-health advocacy into her music since the beginning—not only does her site link prominently to the Suicide Prevention Lifeline, but she's worked with Altitudes in Reverse to raise awareness for youth suicide prevention. *Heaven Punk* was created to show Taylor's listeners that they can channel the worst parts of themselves into an expression of creativity and growth.

And that they can have a goddamn blast reveling in the melodrama.

"There's a lot of pain embedded deep inside me that I can't really explain except in my music," Taylor says. "A lot of people feel the same way. They have that deep-seated pain that they can't really talk about, and I want to be that voice for them." ☐

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Dan Savage

Gay and married here. My dad got on Instagram, followed me and some of my friends, and then requested to follow a friend whose account is private. My friend stupidly approved my dad's request without realizing it was my dad. There were some R-rated photographs of my husband and me having some pretty kinky (and pretty great) sex with our friend on his account. My dad called me screaming about how he and my late mom were faithful to each other for 42 years and my husband and I shouldn't have gotten married at all if we were going to be having sex with other people. Just before my mother died she confided in me about an affair she'd had and asked me to retrieve and destroy some letters and cards, which I did. I've had three screaming fights with my dad about monogamy in the last two weeks. Can I tell him his marriage wasn't monogamous?

SON BLOWS FRIEND, DAD BLOWS GASKET

No, SBFDG, you can't. Your mom isn't around to defend herself and, absent proof of the affair, your dad will think it's a spiteful (and incredibly) hurtful lie. And even if you had proof, telling your father about your mother's affair would be an act of grotesque cruelty. You have every right to be angry, but poisoning his memories of his marriage isn't a proportionate response to his assholery. Instead, tell your dad your sex life is none of his business and that you refuse to discuss it with him any further. If he brings it up, hang up. Repeat as necessary.

Your mom wanted to take this to the grave. Don't betray her.

I'm a first-time dog owner. I LOVE my dog, but here's the thing: He sleeps in my bed with me, and would probably bark and wake up my roommates if I kicked him out of the room. Is it wrong to masturbate when my dog is on my bed? He's not always sleeping. Could this damage my pup in some way?

CONUNDRUMS ARE TACKY

Dogs have been watching humans fuck for 30,000 years. So long as your pup is a passive observer and not (ick) an active

participant, he'll be fine and you won't go to jail.

I'm a 52-year-old woman who has been in an open relationship with my partner for 2.5 years. Great sex, intense connection, best friends! Early on he expressed a desire for me to play with his ass. At first I did, but I was never comfortable with it. Doing anal with him turns me off. Over the course of the 2.5 years he's become very frustrated. I tell him to go find a woman or a man who enjoys ass as much as he does—we are in an open relationship, after all. He claims he has no time to date anyone else and suggests that I play with his ass or we go our separate ways. It's ludicrous to me that it has come to this. Any words of wisdom?

ASS PLAY OR ELSE

Your "best friend" is a petulant, manipulative asshole. DTMFA.

The idea of spanking my wife really captures my sexual imagination. My wife indulged me once, but she found it degrading and refuses to do it again. Otherwise, our sex life is fantastic. I believe that Dear Prudence would side with my wife: If you don't enjoy it, don't do it. My view is that it's a small inconvenience that brings your husband an incredible amount of joy, so of course you should do it! What are your thoughts?

WIFE IS SO HOT OVER THE KNEE

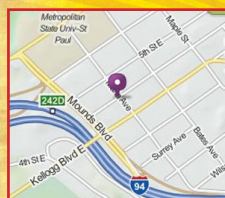
If I were your wife, WISHOTK, your argument would carry the day—but I'm not your wife. Your wife is your wife and she gave spanking a try, found it degrading in a non-sexy way, and doesn't want to do it again. Being treated with respect by our romantic partners—literally the bare-ass minimum—doesn't obligate us to indulge our partners in sex acts we find unpleasant, degrading, or disgusting. So you'll have to settle for that otherwise fantastic sex life.

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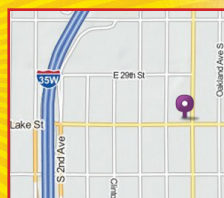
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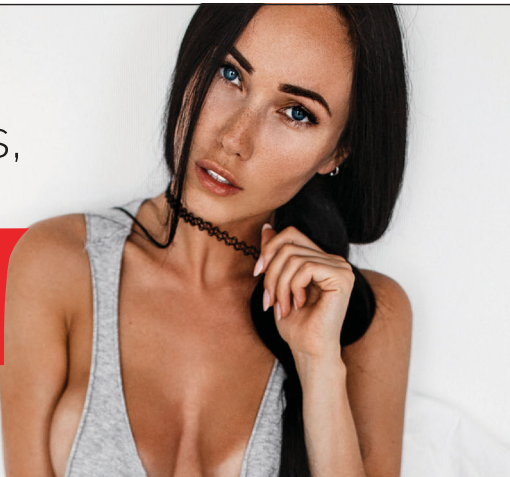
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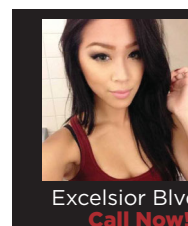


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>> By Rob Brezsny

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19): On September 1, 1666, a London baker named Thomas Farriner didn't take proper precautions to douse the fire in his oven before he went to sleep. Consequences were serious. The conflagration that ignited in his little shop burned down large parts of the city. Three hundred twenty years later, a group of bakers gathered at the original site to offer a ritual atonement. "It's never too late to apologize," said one official, acknowledging the tardiness of the gesture. In that spirit, Aries, I invite you to finally dissolve a clump of guilt you've been carrying...or express gratitude that you should have delivered long ago...or resolve a messy ending that still bothers you...or transform your relationship with an old wound...or all of the above.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20): The Committee to Fanatically Promote Taurus' Success is pleased to see that you're not waiting politely for your next turn. You have come to the brilliant realization that what used to be your fair share is no longer sufficient. You intuitively sense that you have a cosmic mandate to skip a few steps—to ask for more and better and faster results. As a reward for this outbreak of shrewd and well-deserved self-love, and in recognition of the blessings that are currently showering down on your astrological House of Noble Greed, you are hereby granted three weeks' worth of extra service, free bonuses, special treatment, and abundant slack.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20): No one can be somewhat pregnant. You either are or you're not. But from a metaphorical perspective, your current state is a close approximation to that impossible condition. Are you or are you not going to commit yourself to birthing a new creation? Decide soon, please. Opt for one or the other resolution; don't remain in the gray area. And there's more to consider. You are indulging in excessive in-betweenness in other areas of your life, as well. You're almost brave and sort of free and semi-faithful. My advice about these halfway states is the same: Either go all the way or else stop pretending you might.

♊ CANCER (June 21-July 22): The Appalachian Trail is a 2,200-mile path that runs through the eastern United States. Hikers can wind their way through forests and wilderness areas from Mount Katahdin in Maine to Springer Mountain in Georgia. Along the way they may encounter black bears, bobcats, porcupines, and wild boars. These natural wonders may seem to be at a remote distance from civilization, but they are in fact conveniently accessible from America's biggest metropolis. For \$8.75, you can take a train from Grand Central Station in New York City to an entry point of the Appalachian Trail. This scenario is an apt metaphor for your right now, Cancerian. With relative ease, you can escape from your routines and habits. I hope you take advantage!

♊ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Is 2018 turning out to be as I expected it would be for you? Have you become more accepting of yourself and further at peace with your mysterious destiny? Are you benefiting from greater stability and security? Do you feel more at home in the world and better nurtured by your close allies? If for some reason these developments are not yet in bloom, withdraw from every lesser concern and turn your focus to them. Make sure you make full use of the gifts that life is conspiring to provide for you.

♊ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): "You can't find intimacy—you can't find home—when you're always hiding behind masks," says Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Junot Diaz. "Intimacy requires a certain level of vulnerability. It requires a certain level of you exposing your fragmented, contradictory self to someone else. You running the risk of having your core self rejected and hurt and misunderstood." I can't imagine any better advice to offer you as you navigate your way through the next seven weeks, Virgo. You will have a wildly fertile opportunity to find and create more intimacy. But in order to take full advantage, you'll have to be brave and candid and unshielded.

♊ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): In the coming weeks, you could reach several odd personal bests. For instance, your ability to distinguish between flowery bullshit and inventive truth-telling will be at a peak. Your "imperfections" will be more interesting and forgivable than usual, and might even work to your advantage, as well. I suspect you'll also have an adorable inclination to accomplish the half-right thing when it's impossible to do the perfectly right thing. Finally, all the astrological omens suggest that you will have a tricky power to capitalize on lucky lapses.

♊ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): French philosopher Blaise Pascal said, "If you do not love too much, you do not love enough." American author Henry David Thoreau declared, "There is no remedy for love but to love more." I would hesitate to offer these two formulations in the horoscope of any other sign but yours, Scorpio. And I would even hesitate to offer them to you at any other time besides right now. But I feel that you currently have the strength of character and fertile willpower necessary to make righteous use of such stringently medicinal magic. So please proceed with my agenda for you, which is to become the Smartest, Feistiest, Most Resourceful Lover Who Has Ever Lived.

♊ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): The state of Kansas has over 6,000 ghost towns—places where people once lived, but then abandoned. Daniel C. Fitzgerald has written six books documenting these places. He's an expert on researching what remains of the past and drawing conclusions based on the old evidence. In accordance with current astrological omens, I suggest you consider doing comparable research into your own lost and half-forgotten history. You can generate vigorous psychic energy by communing with origins and memories. Remembering who you used to be will clarify your future.

♊ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): It's not quite a revolution that's in the works. But it is a sprightly evolution. Accelerating developments may test your ability to adjust gracefully. Quickly shifting story lines will ask you to be resilient and flexible. But the unruly flow won't throw you into a stressful tizzy as long as you treat it as an interesting challenge instead of an inconvenient imposition. My advice is not to stiffen your mood or narrow your range of expression, but rather to be like an actor in an improvisation class. Fluidity is your word of power.

♊ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It's the Productive Paradox Phase of your cycle. You can generate good luck and unexpected help by romancing the contradictions. For example: 1. You'll enhance your freedom by risking deeper commitment. 2. You'll gain greater control over wild influences by loosening your grip and providing more spaciousness. 3. If you are willing to appear naive, empty, or foolish, you'll set the stage for getting smarter. 4. A blessing you didn't realize you needed will come your way after you relinquish a burdensome "asset." 5. Greater power will flow your way if you expand your capacity for receptivity.

♊ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): As you make appointments in the coming months, you could re-use calendars from 2007 and 2001. During those years, all the dates fell on the same days of the week as they do in 2018. On the other hand, Pisces, please don't try to learn the same lessons you learned in 2007 and 2001. Don't get snagged in identical traps or sucked into similar riddles or obsessed with comparable illusions. On the other other hand, it might help for you to recall the detours you had to take back then, since you may thereby figure out how to avoid having to repeat boring old experiences that you don't need to repeat.

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